

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 6,445,437 to Miyazaki et al. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Applicant respectfully submits that the Miyazaki et al. reference fails to disclose all of the features of the present invention. More specifically, the Miyazaki et al. reference fails to disclose a liquid crystal display that includes, *inter alia*, “a pillar spacer provided such that a region having an alignment defect . . . is formed across adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as defined in independent Claim 1. Nor does the Miyazaki et al. reference disclose a liquid crystal that includes, *inter alia*, “a pillar spacer which is formed on the light shielding film and provided such that it protrudes from the light shielding film into adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as defined in independent Claim 9.

One example of an embodiment defined by Claim 1 is shown in Applicant’s Figure 4, which shows a pillar spacer 18 that forms an alignment defect region “a.” As can be seen in Figure 4, the alignment defect region “a” is formed across four neighboring pixel regions (region a1 in a first pixel region, region a2 in a second pixel region, region a3 in a third pixel region and region a4 in a fourth pixel region). It should be noted that although the Figure 4 embodiment includes an alignment defect region formed across *four* neighboring pixel regions, Claim 1 merely states that the pillar spacer is provided such that an alignment

defect is “formed across adjoining ones of the pixel regions.” Accordingly, Claim 1 is satisfied if the alignment defect is formed across two or more adjoining pixel regions.

In contrast, the devices of the Miyazaki et al. reference lack the claimed “pillar spacer provided such that a region having an alignment defect . . . is formed across adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as defined in independent Claim 1. For example, Figure 20 of the Miyazaki et al. reference shows pillar spacer 33 that forms a region having an alignment defect at area 44. As can be seen in Figure 20 of the Miyazaki et al. reference, area 44 is formed in a TFT shielding area 36, and is not “formed across adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as defined in independent Claim 1.

The Figure 23 embodiment of Miyazaki et al. also fails to show the claimed “pillar spacer provided such that a region having an alignment defect . . . is formed across adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as defined in independent Claim 1. Although Figure 23 shows an alignment defect 57 created by pillar spacer 33 is formed across blue pixel 32B, it is not “formed across adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as recited in Claim 1(i.e., the defect region is only formed across a single pixel, and not across multiple adjoining pixels).

Thus, for the reasons discussed above, the Miyazaki et al. reference fails to disclose all of the features of independent Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of this §102 rejection of independent Claim 1 and associated dependent Claims 2-8.

With regard to independent Claim 9, Applicant respectfully submits that the Miyazaki et al. reference lacks “a pillar spacer which is formed on the light shielding film and provided such that it protrudes from the light shielding film into adjoining ones of the pixel regions.” One example of an embodiment that includes this feature is shown in Applicant’s Figures 5 and 6, which show pillar spacer 18 that protrudes into four adjacent pixel regions (i.e., it “protrudes into adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as defined in independent Claim 9). It should be noted that although the embodiment of Applicant’s Figures 5 and 6 includes a pillar spacer that protrudes into *four* neighboring pixel regions, Claim 9 merely states that the pillar spacer protrudes into “adjoining ones of the pixel regions.” Accordingly, Claim 9 is satisfied if the pillar spacer protrudes into two or more adjoining pixel regions.

In contrast, none of the embodiments of the Miyazaki et al. reference include a pillar spacer that “protrudes into adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as defined in independent Claim 9. For example, in Figure 20 of the Miyazaki et al. reference, pillar spacer 33 does not protrude into any of the pixel regions, but is instead formed in a TFT shielding area 36. Nor is this feature shown in the Figure 23 embodiment of the Miyazaki et al. reference, in which the pillar spacer 33 once again does not protrude into any of the pixel regions, but is instead formed on light shielding layer 36.

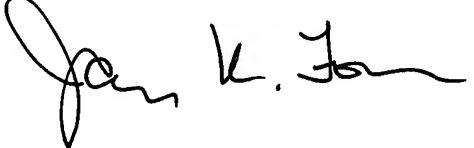
Thus, for the reasons discussed above, the Miyazaki et al. reference fails to disclose all of the features of independent Claim 9. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of this §102 rejection of independent Claim 9.

For all of the above reasons, Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of the claimed invention. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would aid in the prosecution of the application, or that outstanding issues exist, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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